(Rs. in crores)

1998-99	1997-98	1996-97
14713.02	14207.60	12464.94

Total profit/loss in Coal India Limited for the last three years are given as under:

(Rs. in crores)

1998-99	1997-98	1996-97
1451.79	1998-99	1 137.42

Steps for Improving Production of HCL

704. SHRI SHIBU SOREN: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to stale:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Hindustan Copper Ltd. (HCL) has failed to achieve its target growth of metal concentrates for the period January to November, 1999 by four per cent;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that it was due to the liquidity crunch; and

(d) what action is being taken/has been taken to improve the production of HCL?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS (DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA): (a) to (c)Yes, Sir. As against the target of 32449 tonnes of Metal in Concentrate (MIC) production, Hindustan Copper Limited (HCL) has produced 31278 tonnes of MIC during January to November, 1999 which is 96% of the set target. Hindustan Copper Limited (HCL) is facing liquidity problem due to unfavourable market conditions like severe drop in the International price (LME) of copper, competition from private copper producers who have acces to cheap imported , concentrate, poor ore grade in Khetri, Rakha and Surda mines etc. This has resulted in a situation where HCL is unable to provide for the essential plant inputs which has adversely affected the production of MIC.

(d)The Govt, have taken the following setps to improve the performance of the HCL:

(i) Conversion of Outstanding loan of Rs. 180.73 crores as on 31.3.1998 into Equity and Waiver of Outstanding interest of Rs. 167.43 crores;

(ii) In principle approval for grant of non-plan loan of Rs. 414 crores to HCL during 1998-99 to 2001-2002, to reduce surplus workforce through Voluntray Retirement Scheme. Out of which Rs. 60 crores has been released during 1998-99 and Rs. 100 crores during 1999-2.000, An additional amount of Rs. 40 crore has been provided in RE 1999-2000 for this purpose.

(iii) Government guarantee was provided to HCL ot raise a Working Capital Term loan of Rs. 75 crores from IDBI in August, 1999. Govt, has also agreed to extend its guarantee to enable the Company to raise a further loan of Rs. 75 crores from IDBI.

Coal Fields in Assam

705. DR. (SMT.) JOYASREE GOSWAMI MAHANTA: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of underground-wise and opencast-wise coal fields operating in Assam;

(b) the calssifications of grading under which the coal of Assam falls;

(c) whether the quality of coal of Assam has been thoroughly examined by experts; if so, when;

(d) whether Government have taken any steps for upgrading the quality of coal through treatment; and

(e) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS (DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA): (a) There are two coalfields operating in Assam under North Eastern Coalfields (NEC), a unit directly controlled by Coal India Limited. The Coal mines under the two coalfields are given below:—

(i) Makum coalfields, having following mines
Baragolai Colliery Underground
Ledo Colliery Underground
Tipong Colliery Underground
Tikak Colliery Opencast
Tirap Colliery Opencast